

Women's Participation in Simultaneous Village Head Elections in Bandung Regency

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Abstract

The simultaneous village head election in Bandung Regency in 2021 was attended by 194 male village head candidates and 13 female village head candidates. The lack of women running for village heads can be seen from the driving and inhibiting factors. This study aims to determine the driving factors and obstacles for women participating in the simultaneous election of the Village Head in Bandung Regency in 2021. A qualitative approach, the literature study method, was used in this study. The research data is sourced from journal articles that have been published and are available on Google Scholar. This study found that the factors driving women to participate in simultaneous Pilkades in Bandung Regency include: first, female village head candidates understood their political freedom. This can be seen in his participation in the candidacy for village head in the simultaneous Pilkades in 2021 in Bandung Regency; second, the education and abilities of women who continue to develop. This can be seen in female village head candidates' access to education and capabilities in the simultaneous 2021 Pilkades in Bandung Regency.

Keywords: Village Head, Participation, Women, Politics

Abstrak

Pemilihan Kepala Desa serentak di Kabupaten Bandung tahun 2021 diikuti oleh 194 calon kepala desa laki-laki dan 13 calon kepala desa perempuan. Minimnya perempuan yang mencalonkan diri sebagai kepala desa dapat dilihat dari faktor pendorong dan penghambatnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui faktor pendorong dan hambatan perempuan dalam mengikuti pemilihan Kepala Desa pemilihan serentak di Kabupaten Bandung tahun 2021. Pendekatan kualitatif, metode literatur study digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Data penelitian ini bersumber dari artikel jurnal yang sudah dipublikasi dan tersedia di Google Scholar. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan faktor pendorong perempuan turut berpartisipasi dalam Pilkades serentak di Kabupaten Bandung diantaranya: pertama, calon kepala desa perempuan telah memahami kebebasannya dalam bidang politik. Hal ini terlihat dalam partisipasinya dalam pencalonan sebagai kepala desa pada pilkades serentak tahun 2021 di Kabupaten Bandung; kedua, pendidikan dan kemampuan perempuan yang terus berkembang. Hal ini dapat dilihat dalam akses pendidikan dan kemampuan yang dimiliki calon kepala desa perempuan dalam pilkades serentak tahun 2021 di Kabupaten Bandung.

Kata kunci: Kepala Desa, Partisipasi, Perempuan, Politik

INTRODUCTION

Women's access to the public sphere has begun to open in various fields, from education to economics to politics. The opening of women's access in the public sphere is driven by society's understanding of women's rights, even though, in the view of traditional society, there is still the marginal treatment of women in their daily lives. Currently, many women can access higher education, both from rural and urban areas. This is inseparable from understanding the importance of education for

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women by their parents as a form of improving self-quality, which can also improve the quality of their life (Tasia & Nurhasanah, 2019).

A better quality of life is, of course, marked by the fulfilment of the needs of daily life. This can be realized through the work process. The opportunity for women to participate in working in the public sphere has contributed greatly to the economy of their families. However, it is inseparable from the pros and cons of women working in society. Women work in the view of traditional society, not as an obligation because the family's breadwinners are men or husbands. Despite the negative views of traditional society, working wives provide more value to the family. Namely, husbands respect them. Although they cannot be separated from the consequences of women's double burden and conflicts in the household, their contribution to the family economy can be seen (Sulastr, 2021). In recent decades, women have been given space to contribute to national development programs strengthened by the 2000 Presidential Instruction on Gender Mainstreaming (PUG). Presidential instructions are implemented in development programs starting from planning, drafting, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating national development policies and programs with a gender perspective in accordance with the fields of tasks and functions and the authority of each government agency. This also influences women's involvement in politics.

The influence of gender mainstreaming in politics can be seen in Law No. 31 of 2002 concerning political parties. Clearly stated clauses regarding gender-just affirmative action through increasing the number of women in the management of political parties. In Law no. 12 of 2003 concerning elections, specifically in article 64, paragraph 1 states that each political party participating in the election can nominate candidates for members of the DPR, Provincial DPRD and Regency/City DPRD for each electoral district by taking into account the representation of women at least 30 per cent (Soetjipto, 2005). The presence of Affirmative Action has had a major influence on women's involvement in politics. This has also opened up opportunities for women to be involved in managerial positions within the central, regional and village governments. The managerial position at the village level, namely the village head, is directly elected by the residents and is known as the democratic party of the villagers.

Several studies explain women's leadership at the village level from various perspectives, which can be grouped into positive and negative views. Various positive and negative views emerged in society about women leaders. This is to Emanratu's research (2021) on women's leadership from the perspective of village communities. Women's leadership in Lauran Village, South Tanimbar District, West Southeast Maluku Regency, can pay more attention to conventional political issues but to more sensitive matters such as economy, education, housing, environment, and social welfare. The community believes that women have high sensitivity. If this sensitivity is managed and controlled properly, activities on social issues will be more responsive and solvable. If women's sensitivity is not controlled, it will have an excessive emotional impact, so it is not good to be used as a basis for decision-making. Based on the results of this study, society still has a stigma on women who are emotional and unfit to be leaders.

Women encounter cultural barriers from the Maliki Air Village, Sungai Full City, and Jambi community to become a leader. This is explained in the research results of Saputra & Azmi (2021). The village head of women faces obstacles in the form of socio-cultural obstacles in the community in seeing women's rights in the public sphere. This is inseparable from the influence of patriarchal culture, which positions men as leaders, not women. Society still sees women's domestic role as a housekeeper, so it can limit women's space for movement when they enter the public sphere.

Women who enter the public sphere can show success, especially in carrying out their leadership in the village. Research Utaminingsih et al. (2020) shows the success of the Bunder Madura Village Head

in the village development program. The achievements made by the female village head were able to change the status of a traditional village from becoming a self-help village to a self-help village and a self-supporting village. Various awards were received by the village head of the Bunder Village women, including increasing residents' income (farmers or salt workers) through modern salt processing innovations that can increase production with good quality and be suitable for consumption. In education, the village head of Bunder village women fosters interest in reading by building a library that all community members can access. Women's contribution to development programs in Bunder Village is a form of representation of feminism in society which is reflected in the willingness of women to build villages. Other village officials and support from all levels of society also support women's activities in developing villages.

To form community support for women leaders in a village requires skills in the right communication style and conflict management. This is to the results of research by Salim & Triwardhani (2023), which explains that a smooth communication style, not speaking in a high tone and harsh language, is accompanied by a motherly attitude as a method of resolving conflict. Through this communication style, female village heads can solve problems in society and prove women's abilities as leaders. To become a leader at the village level this can be achieved through the village head election process as a form of democracy where villagers directly elect their leaders. In 2021, to be precise, in October, Village Head elections were held simultaneously throughout Indonesia, despite several delays resulting from the increasing number of Covid cases.

Based on data from the Bandung District Village Community Empowerment Service (DPMDes), on October 20, 2021, village head elections (Pilkades) were held simultaneously in 52 villages. The concurrent Pilkades for Bandung Regency was attended by 207 candidates for village heads, consisting of 194 men and 13 women. In quantity, the candidacy for female Village Heads is only 6.28% of the total number of Village Head candidates competing in the simultaneous Pilkades in Bandung Regency. Based on this phenomenon, it can be seen that women's active participation in the Village Head Election (PILKADES) in Bandung Regency already exists. However, in terms of quantity, it is still relatively small when referring to affirmative action of at least 30%. This research is different from existing previous research on female village heads. Researchers explored data on women's participation in simultaneous Pilkades in Bandung Regency, focusing more on the factors driving women to run for Village Head. This research is important to describe the encouragement for women to participate in the Pilkades process simultaneously in 2021.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher uses a qualitative approach with a literature review as the research method, and the analysis is descriptive to provide an easy understanding for the reader (Cresweel, 2009). Literature review as a written summary derived from journal articles, books and other documents. Information from various written sources to describe past and current theories is categorized according to the research topic. The researcher uses journal articles published from 2019 to 2023 concerning women's participation in village politics available on Google Scholar as the unit of analysis. The primary data in this study come from journal articles related to women's participation in politics, while books and other articles serve as secondary data sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Thirteen women have participated in simultaneous Pilkades in Bandung Regency as candidates for village heads. It was recorded that the eleven female village head candidates came from 9 villages (DPMDes, 2021), which are more clearly presented in the following table 1:

Table 1. Candidates for Women's Village Heads in the Simultaneous Pilkades of Bandung Regency

No	Village / District	Number of Village Head Candidates		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Wargaluyu/ Arjasari	4	1	5
2	Neglasari/ Banjaran	3	2	5
3	Jatiendah/ Cilengkrang	2	3	5
4	Sukamaju/ Cimaung	2	1	3
5	Pakutandang/ Ciparay	4	1	5
6	Buninagara/ Kutawaringin	2	2	4
7	Majalaya/ Majalaya	4	1	5
8	Padaulun/ Majalaya	1	1	2
9	Pasirjambu/ Pasirjambu	4	1	5

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that women want to run for Village Head and compete with men. If we take a closer look, the candidates for the Head of Jatiendah Village, Cilengkrang District, are dominated by women, namely three candidates, while only two men. This is a unique phenomenon compared to other villages where male dominance still appears in the Pilkades process simultaneously in Bandung Regency.

The results of the Simultaneous Pilkades in Bandung Regency, four of the thirteen female Village Head candidates got the highest votes, so they were elected as Village Heads. Four villages that chose a female Village Head in Bandung Regency include Jatiendah Village, Cilengkrang District, Sukamaju Village, Cimaung District, Buninagara Village, Kutawaringin District, and Pasirjambu Village, Pasirjambu District (DPMDes, 2021).

Many women have gotten out of the social stigma that positions women in the domestic sphere. Women have been allowed to prove their ability to work in the public sphere to lead on a small or large scale. The gender injustice often felt by women has begun to erode because of the opportunity to show their abilities in the public sphere. It has been discussed previously that some women dared to run for Village Head during the simultaneous Pilkades, especially those held in Bandung Regency. To analyze the things that motivate or encourage women to run for office as village heads, the researchers summarized them into several categories, including:

Freedom of Women in Politics

Regulations regarding freedom in politics have existed in Indonesia for a long time. This can be seen in Law Number 68 of 1958 concerning the Agreement on the Convention on Women's Political Rights on the International Convention on Women's Political Rights. The law explains that men and women have the same rights to vote or be elected without discrimination. The elimination of forms of discrimination against women in the political field has also been regulated in Law Number 7 of 1984. Eliminating discrimination against women in politics, of course with human rights, is legalized in Law Number 39 of 1999, listed in Articles 46 and 49 (Tridewiyanti, 2012).

Legal guarantees given by the state to its citizens, especially women, so that they do not receive discrimination in politics are contained in various laws and regulations. To realize gender equality and justice in the political sector in Indonesia, various steps need to be taken, one of which is an affirmative

action, a special action by the Government of Indonesia to increase women's participation and representation, especially in the legislature as much as 30% contained in Law Number 2 of 2011 article 2 (Tridewiyanti, 2012).

The presence of a legal product with a minimum quota for women's representation of 30% and guarantees political freedom already exists. Still, in reality, women are often marginalized, especially in terms of leadership. Community members are often trapped in the idea that women cannot lead, so they cannot be used as leaders (Muslimat, 2020). This understanding began to erode when Megawati Soekarno Putri succeeded in occupying the position of President of the Republic of Indonesia in 2001, even though there was turmoil in society when women led this country. Pros and cons continue to occur in society based on their understanding of freedom in politics.

Ilaa (2021) explains that to gain freedom and justice in politics in Indonesia, women encounter obstacles from a patriarchal culture. To fight for political freedom and justice for women through the feminist movement. Through the feminist movement, women began to be given the same opportunities as men in obtaining their political rights. Indonesian feminist movement has been carried out since the time of RA. Through her emancipation of women, Kartini is now slowly gaining political freedom for women, although not yet maximized.

Freedom in politics for women has begun to be understood by members of society and women themselves. This can be seen in managerial positions in government held by women, starting from the national level, such as the Minister. Vinta (2022) explains that there are six female ministers currently serving in the government cabinet of Joko Widodo and Ma'ruf Amin, including Sri Mulyani Indrawati holding the position of Minister of Finance; Tri Rismaharini as Minister of Social Affairs; Retno L. P. Marsudi as Minister of Foreign Affairs; Ida Fauziyah as Minister of Manpower; Siti Nurbaya Bakar as Minister of Environment and Forestry; I Gusti Ayu Bintang Darmawati as Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (PPPA).

In contrast to ministers who are elected by the President, Regional Heads such as Governors, Regents and Mayors to the Village Administration are directly elected by the community through Pilkada and Pilkades. In the simultaneous Pilkades implementation in 2021 in Bandung Regency, it was recorded that as many as thirteen women dared to run for candidacy to compete and were directly elected by community members. This is inseparable from his understanding of political freedom, not only as a voter but as an elected person. Women's understanding of their freedom in politics at the village level manifests in participation as a candidate for Village Head.

Women's participation in politics is important in building social and political conditions to create equality between men and women. Garis & Trisnia (2021) explain that women's political participation is necessary for gender justice in public policy. Women's participation is often trapped in cultural understanding, placing women in the private sphere while men are in the public sphere.

Widiyaningrum (2020) explains that women can participate in formulating regional policies through political positions. Political positions are synonymous with high power in society because community members directly elect them. People who are still influenced by patriarchy still have views on women that tend to marginalize them, but such a mindset must be eliminated because everyone in politics has the same right to be elected and vote.

Women who run for Village Head in the simultaneous Pilkades show their understanding of their political rights. This is motivated by women who are successful in their leadership and can be accepted by society. Communities can accept and recognize women's leadership because there is evidence of the performance carried out by female village heads. Saputra & Azmi (2021) explain that the community can

accept the female village head as a leader in the village because of her ability to carry out her duties as a village head which is supported by her experience in leading village development programs. The female village head's attitude and personality became the villagers' evaluation and even became a motivation to follow in her footsteps. The performance shown is a better form of village community development by creating physical and non-physical changes, such as the community's mindset towards women's leadership.

Understanding of women's political freedom has been seen when women can participate in regional elections simultaneously. Women's participation in the Pilkades is minimal compared to men, but as much as 6.28% is the first step for women to compete with men. This was proven by the fact that four female village head candidates won simultaneous village elections in Bandung Regency.

Women's Education and Capabilities that Continue to Grow

Women participating as candidates for village heads in simultaneous village elections in Bandung Regency were supported by their ability to manage village communities and with qualified education. It can be seen that of the thirteen female village head candidates in the simultaneous village election in Bandung Regency, four women received tertiary education, while the remaining nine female village head candidates only received senior high school education. At that time, the requirement for selecting a village head was a minimum of a junior high school education so that women who did not continue their tertiary education could pass administration. Women need education to improve their abilities. Women can access formal and informal education. Formal education is obtained through official education organized by the government from elementary to high level. Informal education can be obtained through courses or others organized by the government or the community.

Formal education for women can be used as a means of social change, especially in the social stratification system of society. Social stratification in society occurs because there are things that are valued. Education is currently one that is valued in society. In their research, Indy et al. (2019) explained that society's social coating system becomes open through education. Through education, citizens can seize the opportunity to occupy a higher social status. The higher the education, the more open the opportunity to get a decent job. This is related to women who run for village heads, with education improving their social status in society. Education, of course, can be balanced with the ability to solve life's problems and society in general.

In increasing women's political ability, women can obtain gender-just political education. Suhara (2019) explains that to realize gender-equity education, there are four steps: first, educators consisting of competent parents, teachers and community members are given the right principles of gender justice. This can be realized by providing equal opportunities for male and female students to get material and improve. Second, students are more creative in learning, thinking and analyzing, and can master various disciplines for future provision. Third, a gender-oriented curriculum to eliminate stereotypes of women that are debilitating. Fourth, the socialization of gender ideology in society, starting from individuals, families, schools and even the state, which is socialized through the mass media.

Currently, the mass media can be used to socialize gender to achieve gender justice. Through the mass media, public members can find information about successful female leaders in various regions of Indonesia. The form of gender socialization through the mass media has indirectly provided an understanding that women can become leaders. This can be used as a motivation for women to become leaders in a society that is still confined to a patriarchal culture. Not only as a tool to motivate women, but the mass media can also provide knowledge on digital track records, both the successes and

shortcomings of a potential leader. Sarinastiti & Fatimah (2019) explain that women choose based on their understanding of the candidate's track record through online media or television in exercising their political rights.

Women need political education to gain knowledge about politics and those related to power. Hendrarto (2019) explains that women's political education is important in a democracy. The government carries out political education programs for women in collaboration with mass organizations, NGOs and others. Achievements in political education for women are advancing democracy, ending the depoliticization of women and increasing women's political participation, especially in rural areas. Now that access to education for women has begun to open. It is time for women to make social changes for themselves and society according to their education and abilities. Women mobilized their abilities to get votes in simultaneous village elections in Bandung Regency. This can be seen in the results of the simultaneous Pilkades election in Bandung district in 2021. Four female village head candidates got the most votes from voters.

The election of four female village heads in the simultaneous village elections in Bandung Regency in 2021 shows a change in society's understanding of gender. Leaders do not only refer to male figures, but now women also have the right to be leaders. To become leaders, women have the right to make important societal decisions. Destemi & Hartati (2020) explain that women can make decisions as leaders, including several aspects: first, access in the form of recognition, opportunities, and guarantees of freedom for women to make choices. Second, awareness and recognition of women's identity in social and political life. Third, participation is a form of full involvement of women in decision-making. Fourth, control is a form of authority or equal right for every woman to use and supervise the implementation of every decision.

CONCLUSION

Women's participation in the simultaneous Pilkades in Bandung district in 2021 is inseparable from their internal drive in the form of an understanding of political freedom, education, and abilities. An understanding of freedom in politics can be obtained from the mass media, which informs the success and abilities of women leaders. This can motivate women to want to run for leadership in the village or village head. Becoming a leader at the village level, of course, requires provision in the form of formal and informal education that can increase his knowledge and deepen his abilities.

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